



AGGRESSIVE DRIVING

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) defines aggressive driving as "the operation of a motor vehicle in a manner which endangers or is likely to endanger persons or property." According to NHTSA, the practice of driving aggressively is not new, but it now seems more widespread and even acceptable in our fast-paced society.

The NHTSA reports that an estimated 6,394,000 collisions were reported to police in the year 2000, involving an estimated 2,088,492 drivers. These resulted in about 2,063,000 injuries and 25,492 deaths.

Aggressive drivers appear to be a growing contributing factor in these collisions. Aggressive drivers are becoming common in our society. By the time teenagers receive a driver's license, they have been exposed to years of aggressive driving not only by their parents, but also their friends and siblings. Television and movies also expose to scenes, which give them the impression that this is the acceptable way to drive.

Aggressive drivers create an unsafe environment through their inconsiderate, self-centered driving habits. Drivers often commit multiple violations as they try to make up time or get ahead of others on the road. In their aggressive state of mind, drivers may not be thinking about the people that occupy the vehicles around them. Aggressive driving leads to hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries each year and contribute to the growing problems of "road rage".

Violent traffic disputes are rarely the result of a single incident, but rather the result of a series of stressors in the motorist's life. The traffic incident that turns violent is often "the last straw."



AGGRESSIVE DRIVING VS. ROAD RAGE

Although the terms are often used interchangeably, there is a distinct difference between aggressive driving and road rage.

Road rage is defined by NHTSA as "an assault with a motor vehicle or other dangerous weapon by the operator or passenger(s) of another motor vehicle or vehicles precipitated by an incident, which occurred on a roadway."

Most people see examples of aggressive driving in some form each and every day on the roads of Connecticut.....

- change lanes abruptly or unnecessarily driving.
- are distracted by various things such as their Cellular phone, eating, even shaving
- use high beams to push driver aside.
- tail gate and intimidate. Dozens of deadly traffic altercations began when one driver tailgated another.
- Rush yellow lights, instead of slowing
- express frustration while driving.
- run red lights.
- speed or follow too closely.
- use obscene gestures.
- make frequent, unnecessary lane changes.
- Speed or travel unreasonably fast
- Use various hand signals or gestures

ADVICE FOR MOTORISTS

Motorists who might respond to provocation from an aggressive driver should think about the realities of the threat.

At least 1,500 men, women, and children are seriously injured or killed each year in the United States as a result of senseless traffic disputes and altercations. There are thousands of mentally and emotionally disturbed individuals on the highway charged with anger, fear and personal frustration. They are often impaired by alcohol or other drugs.

Without exaggeration, millions of motorists are armed with firearms, knives, clubs, and other weapons. Remember that every driver on the highway is armed with a weapon more deadly and dangerous than any firearm — a motor vehicle.

Anyone can become an aggressive driver! People have maimed and murdered other motorists during traffic disputes. These people have been old and young, male and female, rich and poor, well-dressed and poorly dressed. Do not underestimate the potential for violence in any driver.

THE CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE OFFER THE FOLLOWING SAFETY TIPS TO REDUCE AGGRESSIVE DRIVING:

Plan Your Trip – Make sure you know how to get to your destination. Have a possible alternate route or an atlas in your vehicle.

Time – Leave ample travel time, and anticipate delays

Anyone can become a victim – Motorists would be well advised to keep their cool in traffic, to be patient and courteous to other drivers, and to correct unsafe driving habits that are likely to endanger, infuriate, or antagonize other motorists.

Comfort – Adjust your seat and mirrors, and make sure your seat belt and head restraint are correctly positioned.

Attitude – Wind down before you crank up. Try to take a few minutes to focus your mind on the task at hand and try to forget about other problems when driving.

Vehicle Maintenance – Make sure your car is regularly serviced and routinely checked.

Long Trips – Never remain behind the wheel for more than 3 hours without a break. Plan long trips over several days. When you take a break, make sure you get out of the vehicle and stretch your legs.

Anticipate – If you find yourself in traffic congestion, try to accept that there is probably very little that can do to prevent the delay.

Read Highway Warning Signs – Read highway warning signs for construction. Listen to radio advisory for alternate routes, accidents, traffic delays.

Relaxation – Roll down the windows to increase ventilation and consciously breathe in the air slowly. Learn to spot the warning signs and develop positive coping strategies, such as listening to a novel on cassette or the radio. Don't grip the steering wheel. This tenses the arm and neck muscles that can lead to headaches.

Above all, never underestimate the other driver's violence. Be patient and keep your cool, try to conflict if at all possible. If another driver you, take a deep breath and get out of the way. an impulsive action may ruin the rest of your life.



capacity for avoid all challenges Remember, Contact your

State or Local Police to report an incident.

Compliments of:
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